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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this book is to help teachers develop new insight into the learner's experience of science learning in school settings. The book focuses on the personal experience of the learner, taking the position that learning must be understood not only as a cognitive experience but also as an emotional, personal, social, and cultural one. The meaning of a constructivist perspective is clarified by its use in the context of a study. The book is presented in three parts. Part I introduces the idea of constructivism and its development and value, and reviews literature on children's learning in science and children's ideas about light as a background to the study. Part II contains a snapshot portrayal of individual students in the same classroom setting as they learn about the topic of light in the fifth-grade classroom. The case reports identify patterns that constitute each individual's efforts to make meaning in science learning. Part III studies the patterns identified as an ecology of interweaving classroom features, called "personal orientation to science learning," and a summary of the picture of science learning is presented. An epilogue discusses the importance of the personal in a consideration of science learning. (LZ)

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